

Harris Letter Called Love Rival 'Slut'

She Tells of Writing Doctor Hours Before Bullet Killed Him

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. (UPI)—Jean Harris testified today that she described her rival for the love of "Scarsdale Diet" author Dr. Herman Tarnower as an "adulteress," a "whore" and a "slut" in a letter she mailed to the doctor hours before she shot him to death.

Harris also told her jury at her murder trial she believed Tarnower's housekeepers and a local police officer perjured themselves in their testimony about the events the night of March 10, when Tarnower, 69, was killed.

Harris, 57, took the stand for the sixth day in the case in which she is charged with shooting Tarnower in a jealous rage over his affair with Lynne Tryforos, 38, the doctor's pretty blonde assistant.

Headed Girls School

Harris maintains she drove to the doctor's house to be with him "one last time" before committing suicide and that Tarnower died accidentally in a struggle over gun as he was trying to stop her.

Harris is the former headmistress of the exclusive Madeira School for girls in McLean, Va., one of the top private schools for girls in the nation.

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Jean Harris

Prosecutor George Bolen asked Harris about the letter she mailed to the doctor early March 10. That document, dubbed the "Scarsdale letter" after it was retrieved from the Post Office by Harris' attorney, has been closely guarded by the defense.

"Did you describe Lynne Tryforos as 'dishonest?'"

"Yes," Harris answered.

"As an adulteress?"

"Yes, because that's what she

was," the defendant answered.

"As a whore?"

"That pretty well covered it," Harris retorted.

"Did you describe her as 'your whore' (referring to Tarnower)?" Bolen asked. "I was speaking about Tryforos (in relation to Tarnower)," she said.

"Did you describe her as 'your psychotic whore?'"

Called her Crazy

"Suzanne (van der Vreken, Tarnower's cook) always said she was crazy. I didn't use the word whore (in general conversation)," she said.

Harris was asked if she also referred to her rival as a "slut." "I may have. To me they're synonymous. A whore is a whore is a whore."

"That sounds like pretty strong language," Bolen said.

"It was, she said. "It made me struggle very deeply within my own integrity. I couldn't bring myself to walk away (from her own romance with Tarnower) and I couldn't learn to live with it (his affair with Tryforos)" Harris said.

Defense lawyer Joel Aurnou, his face red, his mouth clenched tightly, sat stiffly as his client testified as to her feelings about the younger woman in Tarnower's life.